

Senate Joint Resolution

No. 10

Introduced by Senator Soto

(Principal coauthors: Assembly Members Cohn and Pacheco)

March 4, 2003

Senate Joint Resolution No. 10—Relative to Medicare prescription drug coverage.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SJR 10, as amended, Soto. Medicare prescription drug coverage.

This measure would request the United States Congress to enact outpatient prescription drug coverage as part of the federal Medicare program.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, The use of prescription drugs improves the quality
2 of care and helps patients live healthier, longer, and more
3 productive lives while keeping them out of more costly acute care
4 settings in the long term; and

5 WHEREAS, The increased use of new and improved
6 prescription drugs has changed the delivery of health care in the
7 United States since Medicare was enacted, and while two-thirds of
8 the Medicare population has some form of prescription drug
9 coverage, one-third of Medicare beneficiaries have no coverage at
10 all; and

11 WHEREAS, Because Congress did not enact a drug benefit
12 when it created the Medicare program, the program inadequately
13 provides the elderly and disabled with the most appropriate drug

1 therapies, as well as prevents the delivery of quality health care at
2 an affordable cost; and

3 ~~WHEREAS, Comprehensive reform of the Medicare program~~
4 ~~would utilize the successful tools of other elements in our health~~
5 ~~care delivery system in coordinating care for this population,~~
6 ~~resulting in more choice of quality coverage for seniors and the~~
7 ~~disabled while maintaining the financial sustainability of the~~
8 ~~program; and~~

9 ~~WHEREAS, Congress has not yet achieved a comprehensive~~
10 ~~reform of Medicare, and has encouraged states to use their own and~~
11 ~~other resources to ease the burden of their elderly and disabled~~
12 ~~populations and effectively assume an unfunded, informal~~
13 ~~mandate; and~~

14 WHEREAS, In implementing state programs to assist the
15 Medicare population, state budgetary constraints often result in
16 requirements to restrict and limit a patient's access to needed
17 prescription drugs; now, therefore, be it

18 *Resolved by the Senate and Assembly of the State of California,*
19 *jointly,* That the Legislature requests the United States Congress
20 to enact outpatient prescription drug coverage as part of the federal
21 Medicare program; and be it further

22 *Resolved,* That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of
23 this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United
24 States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to the
25 Majority Leader of the Senate, and to each Senator and
26 Representative from California in the Congress of the United
27 States.

